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ABSTRACT

In response to the emphasis on expanded use of Vermont area vocational centers by adults, an adult career guidance model was developed and pilot tested in one of the centers. An advisory committee was established to review materials, publicize adult guidance sessions, and survey local business for occupational information to be used in adult guidance workshops. Based on review of literature on adult guidance models, procedures and materials were developed with advisory committee input. Three pilot test sessions for adults were conducted with success. A final compilation including procedures, process, development, and implementation resulted in publication of a Job Hunter's Guidebook (ED 159 440) and instructors manual (CE 018 802). Additional results included an annotated bibliography of materials and a training workshop for adult education supervisors with feedback on use of materials. Suggestions for a greater degree of cost effectiveness were made but the judgement of the evaluator was that the overall effect and subsequent impact was positive. Recommendations for future training sessions, a more systematic approach to dissemination, and future variations of the model were made. (FP)

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FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEVELOPING ADULT GUIDANCE-PLACEMENT MODELS IN VERMONT

A Vocational Education Research Project
funded under Part C of the Vocational
Education Act of 1963, as amended.

Operational In The
North County Area Vocational Center
Newport, Vermont

July 1, 1976 - October 31, 1977

CE 017 902

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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2

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION ---------- 1

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES ---------- 2

EVALUATION OF THE ATTAINMENT OF OBJECTIVES ---------- 4

RESULTS/BENEFITS ---------- 7

PROGRAM AND COST EFFECTIVENESS ---------- 10

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ---------- 11

INTRODUCTION

During tne spring of 1976, the Vocational-Technical Division of the Vermont Department of Educatio. established as a priority the expanded use of area vocational centers by adults. At this time, 15 area vocational centers had been established and were operating with full-day programs for regular high school students. As part of a long-range goal to increase the utilization of the area vocational centers, the project evaluated in this report was established.

Under Part C (Research) of the Vocational Education Act of 1963, as amended, the State Department of Education established this project, Developing Adult Guidance - Placement Models in Vermont, and made it operational at the North County Area Vocational Center in Newport, Vermont. The project was operational from July 1, 1976 through October 31, 1977 at a funding level of $19,319.

As part of the research and development aspects of this project, a third party, independent of the project is required to evaluate the formative and summative aspects of the effort. This evaluation report will address the following issues with regard to the Adult Guidance Project.

* The degree to which the process and product objectives were achieved.
* Was the model effective in
  - Assisting adults in establishing career direction?
  - Causing adults to act upon career plans?
* What were the factors of cost effectiveness?
* Was there greater utilization of the area vocational center?

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As established in the original program proposal, the project was to accomplish the following goals and objectives in an effort to yield five results or benefits.

Goal

To assist adults in establishing a career direction through procedures that result in goal identification and a way to achieve the stated career goal.

Objectives to Achieve the Goal

A. To establish an advisory committee who will assist the project director.

B. To complete a review of the literature on adult guidance models.

C. To develop sufficient procedures and documents for two adult guidance models.

D. To implement on a pilot basis at least one guidance model with a minimum of 30 adults in an area vocational center and its sending schools.

E. To complete a documentation of the processes, procedures, development and implementation of the adult guidance models.

F. To complete an evaluation of the implementation of the model using the criteria of cost-effectiveness and results.

Results or Benefits Expected

A. An annotated bibliography of adult guidance procedures, processes and results will be completed.

B. A procedures manual for one adult guidance model will be distributed.

C. Field-tested model(s) in Vermont will be documented and dissemnated.

D. A training session for the adult vocational education supervisors at the area vocational centers will be conducted.

E. An annual evaluation report of the costs and results from the Vermont adult guidance model.

Program direction was established in the early fall of 1976 with the retention of a full-time project director. This individual worked from the office of the North County Area Vocational Center and had the responsibility of achieving the project objectives and ultimate benefits.

EVALUATION OF THE ATTAINMENT OF OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE	ACCOMPLISHMENTS
To establish an advisory committee who will assist the Project Director.	An advisory committee of seven members was established in the fall of 1976 with regular meetings held in December, 1976; January, 1977; February, 1977; and March, 1977. The advisory committee reviewed successive drafts of the adult guidance workshop materials which were developed by the project director. Attendance at these meetings was less than perfect with two members not attending any meetings. A local business survey of Newport labor area employers was conducted to determine such things as the size of the work force, source of job applicants, training performance, and current practices on employer training and advancement. The results of this survey, though general, were used as part of the adult guidance workshop. The advisory committee not only critiqued materials for the guidance workshop, but also suggested the "best" ways to publicize the adult guidance sessions.
To complete a review of the literature on adult guidance models.	A thorough search of the literature was completed early in the project. This was accomplished by the usual ERIC-AIM/ARM computerized search as well as a review of journal articles, materials from universities and commercial sources. With the expanded interest in mid-life career changes and life-long learning, a number of useful materials were identified. A substantial collection of relevant materials is currently housed at the North County Area Vocational Center. Final publication of the project materials has made extensive and useful referance to many of these materials. The project thoroughly reviewed many materials and made productive use of those which had some application to the objectives of this project.
To develop sufficient procedures and documents for two adult guidance models.	Early in the project it was decided to focus on the development and field-testing of a single model for adult guidance. The process of developing the adult guidance materials directly involved the advisory committee. It was decided that the format for the adult guidance

	model would be a workshop involving a group of 10-15 adults spanning a number of weeks. The structure for these workshops, as well as the content was modified a number of times based upon advisory committee input and workshop trial and error. The procedures used in the development of the adult guidance materials was deliberate and well done.
To implement, on a pilot basis, at least one guidance model with a minimum of 30 adults in an area vocational center and its sending schools.	Three pilot test sessions were completed using the adult guidance materials. Date / Enrollment / Completed / % Completed March, 1977: 6 / 4 / 67% June, 1977: 7 / 5 / 71% September, 1977: 6 / 2 / 33% TOTAL: 19 / 11 / 58% The backgrounds of the participants were quite varied, although all had graduated from high school, and only a few were unemployed. Ages ranged from early 20's to mid-60's and there was a good male-female mix. Retension rates were quite good for this type of career development workshop. Other projects reviewed in the literature considered a 40% completion rate to be acceptable. Of those completing the program, five (5) had found employment in their chosen career direction, two (2) had made some choices but had not implemented their decision, two (2) reported no benefit, and two (2) could not be reached. If one considers seven of the eleven participants as having met with "success", the rate is 63.6%. The evaluator had the opportunity to visit about an hour with two of the participants. Both had learned of the workshop via the radio. They were most pleased with the program and identified a number of specific skills which it provided them in terms of assessing their abilities and in seeking jobs. They were articulate in their responses to this evaluator's questions and gave the program high marks. Both seemed a bit timid, however, when it came to actually using their new found job seeking skills.

	Enrollments in the workshops was not nearly as high as anticipated. However, school administrators indicated that this level of response was not unusual. Only eight (8) of twenty-four (24) adult education courses had sufficient enrollemnt to be conducted in the spring of 1977; this represented a 67% cancellation rate. Nevertheless, the small number of workshop participants has not resulted in a true validation of the model.
To complete a documentation of the process, procedures, development and implementation of the adult guidance model.	Much of the documentation of the specific project activities will be addressed in the final report of the project director. However, the project has published a number of documents which address the implementation of the adult guidance model. During the field test stage (March-September, 1977), four preliminary workbooks were developed and used for the workshops on career decision making. * Book #1 - "Hang On World, I Want to Get On." * Book #2 - "Success!! It's Yours for the Asking" * Book #3 - "Making Your Career Decision" * "The Job - Hunter's Guidebook" The material in these booklets were revised as the project neared completion and were finally combined into a single document, You Can Get There From Here, and an accompanying instructor's manual The quality of these final printed documents is excellent. They are professionally done and their attractive nature should enhance their use.

RESULTS - BENEFITS

An annotated bibliography of adult guidance procedures, processes, and results will be completed.	The resource documents acquired and reviewed for this project are currently housed at the area vocational center in Newport. There is an informal index type card catalog of these materials. They are not incorporated into the regular school library setting. An annotated bibliography for these materials has been developed and appears in the final project report.
A procedures manual for one adult guidance model will be distributed.	As mentioned above, a manual of adult career development activities, You Can Get There From Here, has been developed along with a comparison instructor's guide. These booklets are well done and copies have been made available through a series of mailings. The books provide the structure and content for the adult guidance-placement workshop series.
Field tested model(s) in Vermont will be documented and disseminated.	Documentation of the research project and the particulars of the project's activities can be found in the final report. The adult career development books have been disseminated to a number of individuals, schools and public agencies. ERIC will receive a copy of all project publications. A more systematic program of dissemination should have been developed. A specific recommendation will speak to this point later in this report. Sixty copies of the instructor's manual and 500 copies of the workbook were printed.
A training session for the adult education supervisors at the area vocational center will be conducted.	On October 4-5, 1977 a training conference was held in Newport, Vermont for adult education supervisors and other interested professionals. This training workshop was attended by eleven (11) participants, some of whom only remained for part of the conference. The evaluator contacted eight of these participants approximately three months after the training session to determine the utilization of the materials and the guidance model. A synopsis of their response follows: * White River Junction - The area is interested in the program - may implement as a mini-course. They currently serve some 300 people in adult education and have a high regard for the materials.

	* State Staff Member - has not really studied materials - feels they need more promotion. Did not feel the SDE has place for storage of materials for dissemination. * Rutland - Plan to use the materials to inservice the faculty so they can better counsel students. Want to offer a workshop for former graduates who have not been successful in getting a job. * Middlebury - Did not attend the workshop, but did receive the materials. They "looked interesting" and may try them out in their adult program. * CEfA Agency - Highly positive reaction to the materials and are currently using them in work with adults. These people were very specific about the materials, had them at their fingertips and were obviously making good use of the activities. * Randolph - A number of uses have been explored. Currently the adult coordinator has the materials and may use them in a 10 week course on adult guidance. The general reponse to the workshop and the materials was quite positive. It was noted that more care should be given to the workshop presentation and content if it was to be given again in the future.
An annual evaluation report of the costs and results from the Vermont Adult Guidance Model will be provided.	This report fulfills the annual evauation study mentioned.

In summary, it can be said that the project was able to address all of the project objectives which were outlined at the beginning of the program. Discrepancies of not completing all aspects of the objectives were observed as follows.

* Advisory committee participation could have been stronger.

* More participants in the workshop would have yielded a stronger pilot test.

* A more organized dissemination/training effort was needed.

Strong performance was noted in the following areas:

* A thorough review and use of the related literature in adult guidance.

* Thorough procedural development of the project model

* Published materials were of high quality

* Indication by professionals in other school districts of the usefulness of the adult guidance materials.

PROGRAM AND COST EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MODEL

Cost-effectiveness of any educational endeavor is most often a judgemental matter. While we can generate certain ratios of cost to activity, the effectiveness of these activities is difficult to determine.

As a general statement, the design, development and publication of 500 documents on expenditures of $18,150 covering some 16 months represents $36.00 per copy. This is far more reasonable than most research projects.

Other indicators of cost to activity:

* The project served some 40 people in counseling situations at a cost of $454 per person.
* The workshop served 19 people at a cost of $955 per person.
* Workshop completers were 11 in number resulting in a cost of $1,650 per person.

If we look at the five people who have already found employment in the field of their choice as a result of the workshop, the following would likely be true. At an annual salary of $6,000, these individuals will return some $900 per year in taxes to the state and national government. At this rate, these five individuals could pay back the cost of the project in four years.

Having discussed the use of the adult guidance materials in other settings across the state, it would seem that this utilization will increase the cost-effectiveness ratios.

Additional dissemination and training activities could further improve this situation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the judgement of this evaluator, that the overall effort and subsequent impact of the Adult Guidance - Placement Project was positive. Using a single professional staff member with expenditures of approximately $18,000 over 16 months, a feasible model for Adult Guidance in Vermont was designed, developed, field-tested, and disseminated.

There are a number of curious factors which remain, however. First, it seems unusual that such a developmental effort was located in an area of the state which has a low-population density resulting in few adults available for a full-scale field-test.

While other agencies have indicated acceptance and utilization of the Adult Guidance materials, there is no provision for an on-going effort at the Area Vocational Center where the materials were developed.

One of the long range reasons for the Adult Guidance Project was to increase the utilization of the area vocational centers by adults in need of training or retraining. There is no evidence that impact in this area has been achieved.

The quality of the products developed by the project were excellent and these have been well received by processionals in the field. A number of area vocational centers have plans for their use. The CETA agency in St. Albans has already made extensive and productive use of the model.

Recommendations

1. Given the excellent reception the Adult Guidance materials have received, it is recommended that another training session be sponsored in a geographically central location. Such a session should be open to area directors, coop-coordinators, adult educators, vocational guidance counselors and CETA personnel.

2. A well organized and systematic approach to state-wide dissemination should be assumed by the State Department of Education. Copies of the materials should go to key individuals and agencies across the state. This should be accompanied by a strong cover letter encouraging their use and announcing the availability of training sessions.

3. At some point in the future, the State Department of Education may wish to develop a programmed instruction variation of the Adult Guidance Model. While a number of changes in the writing would be required, this job would not be overwhelming.